GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:655
ANSWERED ON:11.05.2005
VERIFICATION OF ICCR PUBLICATIONS
Badiga Shri Ramakrishna;Purandeswari Smt. Daggubati

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government has recalled copies of Maulana Azad`s biography as reported in the Hindustan Times dated April 10, 2005 ;

(b) if so, the details in this regard ;

(c) whether the Government plans to verify all such publications being brought out by the ICCR ;

(d) if not, the reasons therefore ; and

(e) the action proposed to be taken against officials for alleged inaccuracies in the publications ?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (RAO INDERJIT SINGH)

(a) to (e) A Statement is placed on the Table of the House.

Statement referred to Parts (a) to (e) in reply to the Lok Sabha Starred Question No. 655 to be answered on 11.05.2005 regarding Verification of ICCR Publications.

(a)&(b) Government is aware of the book titled `Journey of a Legend` published by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations.

The book has not been released and the Indian Council for Cultural Relations has sealed and safely locked all the copies available with it in secure premises.

This was done in light of an administrative inquiry which revealed that the photograph on page 1 of the book showing Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and President, ICCR seated together on a sofa may be a cut and paste job.

(c) & (d) The Government does not plan to verify other publications brought out by the ICCR. Verification of the authenticity of Council`s publication is the responsibility of the ICCR itself, which is an autonomous organization under the Ministry of External Affairs.

(e) No officials of the ICCR were involved in deciding the photographs and the text of `Journey of a Legend`. All the photographs and text were personally selected by the President of ICCR who had also approved the dummy copy before printing. President, ICCR had also written the introduction to the book. The Editorial Board of the book was headed by President, ICCR and other members of the Editorial Board were chosen by President, ICCR.

The Government is considering further action in the matter.